Assistance for minor ports

559. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government grant financial assistance for development of minor ports under National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP);

(b) if so, the details of proposals received from various States for such assistance, proposals approved and grants released during the last five years, year-wise and state-wise;

(c) whether Karnataka has proposed development of Karwar and Malpe ports in view of their economic and tourism potential;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether only Malpe project has been cleared;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether Karwar project would be reconsidered for approval; and

(h) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (h) Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka has requested for inclusion of the projects for development of Malpe port and Karwar port in the National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP). Government of India has included in the NMDP one non-major port from each Maritime State for promotion of coastal shipping. From Karnataka, Malpe port has been included in the NMDP. According to the proposal, the selected minor ports are to be developed under a new proposed Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The above proposal is yet to be approved by the Government.

Delay in Delhi-Gurgaon expressway

560. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the completion of Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway project has failed once again in its time schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when this project is likely to be completed;

(d) how much budgetary cost has been incurred due to delay in completion;

(e) whether Government would put blame on the private parties engaged in construction work and would also consider to share the burden of delayed cost; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) to (c) The work of Delhi-Gurgaon Access Controlled Highway is now in advanced stage of progress and likely to be completed by December, 2007.

(d) There is no budgetary cost incurred due to delay in completion.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Lunar mission

561. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had decided to send a lunar mission;

(b) if so, the status of the proposal; and

(c) by when the proposal is expected to materialize?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. An unmanned Indian Mission to Moon, called Chandrayaan-I, has been approved by the Government.

The Critical Design Reviews of Chandrayaan-I Space Craft and payload systems have been completed. The flight units of space systems and scientific instruments are in advanced stage of realization. Commissioning the Indian Deep Space Network (IDSN), required to track the Chandrayaan-I is progressing satisfactorily. The 18m antenna has successfully undergone testing and evaluation and is ready for use. The critical design review for the 32m antenna was completed.

(c) The Chandrayaan-I Mission is presently scheduled for launch in the first half of 2008.

RLVs by ISRO

562. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ISRO is planning to make Reusable Launch Vehicles (RLVs) so as to cut its launch costs to less than a tenth of the current costs;

(b) if so, whether it would initially depend upon foreign technology, with a built-in clause for transfer of this technology to India in the near future;

(c) whether building a "Space Station" is on the agenda of ISRO; and

(d) if so, the approximate cost at 2007 price-index?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir. However, ISRO has undertaken the development of Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) Technology as a long term goal. Systematic development and evaluation of some of the enabling technologies have begun. Use of RLV in future is expected to bring down the cost of launch significantly. The actual extent of reduction would be known after the technology matures.